



Restoring Cast Iron Cookware

This is a guide on how to de-rust and re-season a piece of cast iron cookware.

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INTRODUCTION

Cast iron pans and skillets are a joy to cook with, but maintaining them can be demanding and a failure to do so can lead to rusted and ruined cookware. Fortunately, cast iron is resilient and removing that rust is actually quite easy. The main trick to restoring any piece of cast iron cookware is actually properly re-seasoning it. Though there are many methods to accomplish this, our guide aims to present the process with the best blend of cost effectiveness and safety.



TOOLS:

- [Steel Wool](#) (1)
 - [white vinegar](#) (1)
 - [Paper Towels](#) (1)
 - [Large Tub or Basin](#) (1)
 - [Dish Soap](#) (1)
 - [Vegetable Oil](#) (1)
 - [Aluminum Foil](#) (1)
 - [Oven](#) (1)
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Step 1 — Restoring Cast Iron Cookware



- Identify rust spots on the cast iron pan or skillet
- If there is noticeable rust, continue to step 2. If there is not, and the pan or skillet merely needs to be re-seasoned, then skip to step 4.

Step 2



- Prepare the vinegar soak.
- The tub or basin used should be large enough to completely submerge the desired piece of cookware.
- The soak should be roughly a 1:1 ratio between white vinegar and water.
- ⓘ The ratio does not need to be exact; close enough is good enough.

Step 3



- Let the pan or skillet soak for roughly 30 minutes or until the rust begins to flake off.

i An easy way to check if the pan is ready is to scratch lightly at the rust with a fingernail. If it flakes off immediately, remove the pan from the soak.

Step 4



i Thoroughly rinse and refill the tub with water. A kitchen sink can be used for this step instead.

- Thoroughly rinse the pan or skillet, then scrub it with steel wool and dish soap.
- Continue to scrub until there is no remaining rust.

Step 5



- i** It is important to note that the seasoning has now been completely removed along with the rust. This is not a problem as re-seasoning will be covered in the next step.
- Dry the pan or skillet thoroughly. No moisture can remain when continuing onto the next step.
- Optionally, the pan can be placed into an oven set to warm to dry it both quickly and thoroughly.

Step 6



- Coat the pan or skillet with vegetable oil.
- Spread the oil evenly across the surface of the pan.
- i** The coating should be kept relatively thin, so do not be afraid to dab up excess oil with a paper towel.

Step 7



- Spread aluminum foil on the bottom rack of the oven you intend to use.

i This is to catch any drips from the oil coated pan.

Step 8



- Pre-Heat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit .

Step 9



- Place the oil coated pan or skillet face down onto the top rack of the oven.
- Allow the pan or skillet to bake for 1 hour at 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Once the hour is up, turn off the oven, but do not remove the pan yet. Allow the pan to cool down with the oven over the next 45 minutes.

Step 10



- Remove the pan from the oven. Then apply a final, and extremely light, coating of vegetable oil to help smooth over any irregularities.

 If the pan is still hot, use oven mitts to remove it. Burns hurt.

The skillet is now completely restored, good as new. For the best results, reapply the last thin coat of vegetable oil after the next few uses of the cast iron pan or skillet.